## ABSTRACT

An auction forum in an interactive computer system negotiates the price of an item on behalf of the seller with a bidder. The system calculates an acceptable bid based on seller input including such variable as a reserve price and hardness of the sale. The

5     bidder haggles with the computer and tries to offer an acceptable bid based on the seller's asking price and the duration of the auction. The computer system tracks the bidder's progress towards an acceptable bid, giving the bidder a limited number of opportunities to offer an acceptable bid in each session.

10

H:\DATA\6\63596\patent\00118231.DOC